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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 001111

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SUBJECT: GOP PLEDGES REHABILITATION PACKAGE AND SUPPORT FOR IDPS

REF: ISLAMABAD 1100

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary. In a May 21 conference with international relief organizations, diplomatic missions and donor agencies, Prime Minister Gilani announced Pakistan's three-pronged strategy for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) crisis: Relief, Return/Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction. Gilani reported that this strategy will support the approximately USD 500 million UN IDP appeal (to be released on May 22) and the May 20 GOP pledge of PKR 8 billion (approximately USD 100 million), whereby each displaced family would receive a one-time grant of PKR 25,000 (approximately USD 310). Lieutenant General Nadeem with the federal-level Special Support Group reported that the number of displaced is now at 1.74 million (with reports of approximately 200,000 returnees), but he expected the number to reach over 2 million IDPs as people continued to leave Swat. In his National Response Plan, Nadeem plans to focus on the IDPs inside and outside the camps as well as assistance to the host families supporting 80 percent of the displaced. Gilani, Nadeem, and the other federal and provincial officials present assured the international community that the GOP was working tirelessly on the growing IDP crisis, but they expected tremendous support from the international donor community present.

¶2. (C) In a high level meeting between the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the GOP, UNHCR received a pledge from the Minister of Finance for USD 100 million loan facility to permit UNHCR to address humanitarian needs with quick expenditures, pending receipt of donor contributions. End Summary.

PRIME MINISTER'S DONOR CONFERENCE

¶3. (SBU) On May 21, Deputy Chief of Mission and USAID Mission Director attended a conference chaired by Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani for international relief organizations, diplomatic missions and donor agencies, along with representatives from various federal ministries and leadership from the Northwest Frontier Provincial government, to discuss the Government of Pakistan's strategy for the growing internally displaced persons (IDPs) crisis. Gilani reassured the attendees of his country's commitment to eradicate terrorism in Pakistan and called for a unified international effort to respond to the IDP crisis with concrete and visible relief. Gilani also reiterated the

pledge made by the GOP on May 20 for PKR 8 billion (approximately USD 100 million) for IDP support. This pledge, which has been called the Prime Minister's Special Fund for Victims of Terrorism, will provide each displaced family a one-time grant of PKR 25,000 (approximately USD 310).

¶4. (SBU) Gilani also outlined the GOP's National Response Plan to the IDP crisis with its three-pronged approach: Relief, Return/Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction. He stressed that this strategy would be supported by the Special Fund and would complement the May 2009 revision of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan (approximately USD 500 million), which is expected to be released on May 22. Within the "Relief" phase, the GOP plans to continue to give the lead to the NWFP provincial government for providing assistance and coordination. However, Gilani also wants this "relief" effort to be extended to the host families, who are housing 80 percent of the current IDP population, and he believes that immediate infusions of cash would provide the greatest levels of relief for this sector. After the IDPs have been assisted in the short term, the humanitarian relief operations will move into the second phase of "Return/Rehabilitation." Although the GOP would like to have the displaced return to their homes quickly, Gilani does not want to push the IDPs back into danger. In order to assist with the eventual IDP return, the GOP plans to work with humanitarian agencies to develop return packages, including the one-time grants under his Special Fund, to assist those who lost their homes due to the conflict as well as those who "gave of themselves" to host displaced families. Finally, in the "Reconstruction" phase, the GOP, in coordination with the

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international donor community, will assist the affected communities at large within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the NWFP to prevent inequalities between the IDPs and those who were not affected by the military operations. This phase, which was touted by NWFP Chief Minister Hoti as the most important, would include economic and political support through commercial activity and capacity building.

¶5. (SBU) Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmad, who is assisting the federal Special Support Group (SSG), presented the latest IDP facts to the conference, noting that the number of IDPs will always remain fluid due to returnees versus new displaced additions. (Note: Federal Information Minister Kaira is titulary head of SSG. End note.) As of today, Nadeem reported that there were 1.74 million IDPs overall (old and new caseload), with reliable reports of approximately 200,000 IDPs returning to Bajaur and Lower Dir. (Note: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that the IDP total is 1.45 million new cases and 550,000 old cases, for a total of over 2 million IDPs. End note.) Nadeem does expect an additional 500,000 IDPs from the fallout of future Pakistan military operations in the lower FATA agencies and Swat.

¶6. (SBU) Nadeem also outlined his views on the various IDP assistance sectors, including Camp Management, Health, Education, Shelter, Nutrition, and Agriculture. With Camp Management and Nutrition, Nadeem recognized the immediate need to prepare the camps for summer with strong food and water distribution pipelines and requested support in standardizing the food baskets and linking food distribution to registration. For Health, Nadeem plans to monitor potential health outbreaks at the camps while providing primary comprehensive health coverage to those inside and outside the camps and for the host families. Nadeem also plans to provide the necessary water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs as issues arise, with an emphasis on women, children, the disabled and the elderly. With regard to Shelter, Nadeem will have an assessment team look at the shelter requirements for those living in host communities to gain a better understanding of the larger need. In addition, he plans to provide rehabilitation materials, along with

construction training, to the host families in appreciation of their service to their county. Stressing the need to give people something to do while sitting idly in the camps, Nadeem requested support in establishing primary and secondary schools for children 5 through 17 and non-formal skill training for the uneducated IDPs that could be used while displaced and upon return. Within the Agriculture cluster, he wanted to assist those currently returning for the 2009 Kharif crop harvest with transportation to get home and to get crops to functioning markets. Nadeem also requested further assistance with the early recovery phases through cash-for-work programs and the purchase of pre-fabricated offices for temporary use within city centers.

Above all, Nadeem pledged to ensure complete transparency and accountability for his response plan and the international donations making it happen. (Note: Post will request Nadeem's detailed presentation slides to pass to Washington if received. End note.)

GOP PLEDGE TO UNHCR

¶7. (C) UNHCR told Embassy May 20 that in meetings that day with the highest levels of the GOP, UNHCR had received a pledge from the Minister of Finance to provide UNHCR with USD 100 million loan facility to permit UNHCR to address humanitarian needs with quick expenditures pending receipt of donor contributions. Both UNHCR and the GOP do not want to highlight their understanding. UNHCR also told Embassy that its meeting with the GOP was highly productive and serious. The Minister of Foreign Affairs offered to set up a meeting in which he would join UN officials in explaining to mid-level MFA bureaucrats the logic of the UN appeal's "conflict" references (reftel). Both Gilani and Nadeem in the meeting frequently made references to "conflict," "militants," etc. while President Zardari used the word "war" to describe Pakistan's current situation. Meanwhile, the Minister of Interior established a meeting with UNHCR for May

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21 to reconcile problems in registering and accounting for IDPs.

COMMENT

¶8. (C) The Prime Minister's donors conference was a good faith effort by the GOP to show the international community that they are trying to address the IDP issue to the best of their ability while recognizing that donor assistance is greatly needed. Gilani has made strong gains among the Pakistani people through his handling of this crisis, and it is clear that he has given a great deal of faith and responsibility to Nadeem who seems to be truly leading this charge. Most importantly, this conference and the meeting with UNHCR the previous day appear to be the first real instances of GOP coordination, organization, and speaking with one voice on the issue of IDPs. End comment.

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